

Message Text

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44

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 DHA-02 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /082 W
----- 103557

R 241004Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBAGFY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2434

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 2498

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SU, ET, UK

SUBJECT: BRITISH JOURNALIST TO BE RELEASED BY ERITREANS

1. EMBASSY LEARNED FROM APPARENTLY RELIABLE SOURCES AUG 21 THAT BRITISH JOURNALIST JOHN SWAIN IS ALIVE AND IN TRANSIT, AND EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN SUDAN IN A FEW DAYS FROM ERITREA. SWAIN HAD BEEN LOST IN ETHIOPIA AND APPARENTLY HAD BEEN ATTEMPTING TO REACH ERITREAN GROUP WHEN HE DISAPPEARED.

2. WE BROUGHT INFO IMMEDIATELY TO ATTENTION OF BRITISH EMBASSY IN KHARTOUM. BRITISH CHARGE RONALD NEWMAN TOLD ME THAT OUR INFO WAS CONSISTENT WITH INFORMATION HIS EMBASSY HAD RECEIVED. HE EXPLAINED THAT GOS HAD BEEN ACTING AS INTERMEDIARY AND HAD BEEN ACTIVELY ATTEMPTING TO SECURE RELEASE OF SWAIN AND THREE OTHER BRITISH SUBJECTS WHO NEWMAN REFERRED TO AS DANAKIL-THREE. HE INTERPRETED OUR INFO TO MEAN THAT SWAIN PROBABLY HAD BEEN RELEASED. FATE OF OTHERS NOT KNOWN.

3. COMMENT: NEWMAN SAID GOS HAD BEEN FULLY COOPERATIVE IN ASSISTING BRITISH IN OBTAINING RELEASE OF
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HOSTAGES HELD BY ERITREANS. HE ADDED THAT GOS CONDUCT

IN THIS MATTER REVEALS THAT WHATEVER UNHAPPINESS
EXISTED BETWEEN BRITISH AND SUDANESE OVER BBC BROADCASTS
OF SADDIQ AL-MAHDI REMARKS REGARDING JULY COUP ATTEMPT
HERE, IT WILL NOT ALLOW THAT MATTER TO INTERFERE WITH
GOOD BILATERAL RELATIONS NOW. NEWMAN CITED OTHER
EVIDENCE OF SMOOTH BRITISH-SUDANESE RELATIONS FOLLOWING
A COUPLE OF STORMY WEEKS CULMINATING IN MASSIVE
DEMONSTRATION AGAINST BBC WHICH TOOK PLACE HERE THIS
MORNING NEAR BRITISH EMBASSY.
BOGOSIAN

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